(AAI) has incurred an expenditure of Rs. 31.30 crores during the first three years of this Plan, on expansion and modification of terminal building and strengthening of runway. The work of the terminal building is expected to be completed by December, 2000 and runway by December, 2001.

Airline operators are free to decide about the purchase, stationing and operation of their aircraft, subject to the Route dispersal guidelines which specify certain minimum operations to areas like the North-East.

Guwahati airport has already been declared as international airport. No foreign airline has so far requested for Guwahati airport as a point of call.

Night Landing facility at Visakhapatnam Airport

157. DR. Y. LAKSHMI PRASAD: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether night landing facility at the Visakhapatnam airport has been introduced to bring foreign tourists; and

(b) if not by when it is likely to be introduced?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHARAD YADAV): (a) and (b) In view of the obstruction due to surrounding hills, civil aircraft operations can not be permitted after sunset at Visakhapatnam airport.

Improvement of AI's Efficiency

158. SHRI PREM CHAND GUPTA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that during the last 35 years, many airlines have used advanced technology and management methods for improving productivity of aircraft, labour and fuel and the benefits of this have been passed on to passenger by offering lower fares;

(b) whether it is a fact that strategy makes it near impossible for inefficient airlines to compete; and

(c) if so, how does AI with its poor record of efficiency and low rate of productivity, hope to compete with such airlines?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHARAD YADAV): (a) to (e) It is a fact that aviation industry has seen advancement in technology in the last thirty five years. Air India too has taken steps to keep pace with the changes.